

U. S. Department of Agriculture
War Food Administration

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

SUGGESTIONS FOR TRAINING OF FARM WORKERS

Purpose

In the development of a comprehensive program for assisting in providing a supply of farm labor, due consideration should be given to a training program to develop proficiency of such workers. Such a training program assumes that (a) a need for the workers has been established; (b) that the individuals to be trained are available for farm work and that they intend to work on farms during the current season; and (c) that the workers will better serve agriculture if they are trained to do the type of work for which they are employed. In most cases the training should cover orientation and the development of skills, since many workers will be new to agriculture or performing new kinds of work. The amount of training will depend upon the characteristics of the worker, his farm experience, and the type of farm work to be done. It is recognized that much of the training in farm skills will need to be done on the job, and the individuals giving the training should have the benefit of the best methods of training and supervising farm workers.

In general, it is desirable for training to be given by individuals and agencies that are already operating in the field of public education. Therefore, it is desirable for the State directors of extension to work out an over-all plan for the training of farm workers with the State director of vocational education, the State director of Rural War Production Training, and the chief State school officer.

Funds

In developing the training program consideration should be given to the availability of funds and facilities of the cooperating agencies and of any other institutions or individuals that may be used in the training of farm workers.

Educational funds available as a result of Smith-Hughes, George-Deen and Rural War Production Training appropriations, State vocational funds, special State and local funds administered by State departments of education and local boards of education may be available in some States to pay for the cost of training farm workers.

Farm Labor Supply and Distribution funds, Public Law 45, 78th Congress, may be used for training and, when necessary, for subsistence and transportation of workers to facilitate their training. Usually, these funds should not be used for the training when educational funds are available or sufficient to pay the cost of training courses that are needed.

In-School, Nonfarm Youth

Inasmuch as the U. S. Office of Education, State departments of education, or State boards for vocational education will assume primary responsibility for training nonfarm, in-school youth as wartime farm workers, the State director of extension should cooperate with these educational agencies in developing a plan for training such workers.

Out-of-School Intrastate Workers

Year-round or seasonal farm workers who are residents of the State where they will work on farms should be trained in that State. A plan should be worked out by the State director of extension with the State director of Rural War Production Training for the training of these workers.

Out-of-School Interstate Workers

Interstate year-round farm workers who are recruited in one State and moved to another State and need training, should be trained in the State where they are to work. Interstate seasonal workers should be trained at the point of employment, i.e., at a labor placement center or camp, or on the farm. Therefore, a plan for the training of such workers should be developed by the State director of extension with the State director of Rural War Production Training, and with Farm Security Administration when such workers are located in Farm Security Administration labor centers.

Foreign Workers

Seasonal foreign workers will be given orientation training at the point of entry when practicable. Training in specific farm skills will be given in the States where they will be employed. The regional director of Farm Security Administration and the State director of Rural War Production Training should develop plans for a training program at the point of entry. Training of foreign workers after location in a State would be handled cooperatively the same as any other interstate seasonal workers located in Farm Security Administration labor centers.

Women's Land Army

Members of the Women's Land Army may be year-round workers or seasonal workers and may work on farms in States where they reside or in other States. In general, the training should be given in the State where the farm work is to be done. The director of extension and the director of Rural War Production Training should make arrangements with the institutions or schools where it might be desirable to set up such training courses.

Farm Employer or Supervisor

It is generally recognized that farmers and farm supervisors will find it necessary to train and instruct new employees after they are on the job. They should be given help in desirable methods of instructing and training farm workers. The State director of extension should cooperate with the State director of vocational education and State director of Rural War Production Training in developing a plan for assisting farmers to train their farm workers. Nothing can replace the training given the new worker right on the job. The right kind of "breaking in" reduces labor turn-over and contributes to increased satisfaction on the part of both employer and worker. A slightly lower hourly rate of pay during a short learning period may create, in the case of city youth and women and foreign workers, a good learning situation.

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